

F 153

.L48



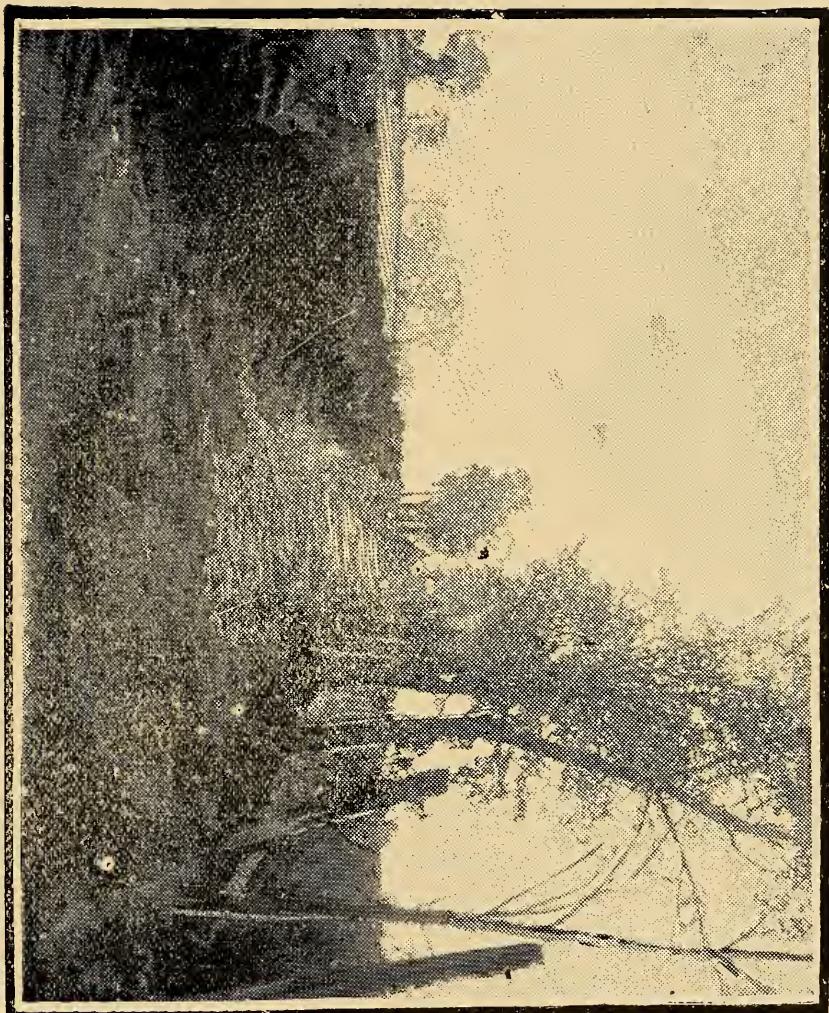


THOMAS LEIPER

By S. Gordon Smyth.

Gift
W. H. Richardson
June 13, 1929

=SITE OF THOMAS LEIPER'S RAILWAY=1809.=



From Photograph by William H. Richardson.

THOMAS LEIPER

LIEUTENANT OF LIGHT HORSE,

PATRIOT AND FINANCIER IN THE REVOLUTION;

AND

PIONEER IN THE DEVELOPEMENT

OF

INDUSTRIES AND INLAND COMMERCE

IN

PENNSYLVANIA.

BY

SAMUEL GORDON SMYTH.

RECODER PRINT: CONSHOHOCKEN, PA.

1900.

F153

L48

THOMAS LEIPER

The early annals of the three original counties of Pennsylvania and the story of their rapid settlement with people drawn by the beneficent principles of the "Holy Experiment" from the bondage of foreign lands, have always presented a ready and fruitful field for historical research.

Under the wise laws and a liberal government instituted by the founder and Proprietary, whose ideas of religious tolerance were the far-reaching influence to this end, Philadelphia very soon became the most cosmopolitan city in the New World, and equally distinguished for the thrift, progressiveness and intellectuality of her citizens.

The light which the pre-Revolutionary newspapers throw upon her history shows that in the last days of the Colonial era, her merchants, factors, traders, shippers and farmers exalted Philadelphia, and she thus became the wealthiest and most conservative of centres, a position unique and pre-eminent in her relation to the capitals of the neighboring provinces.

As we scan the fading pages of our ancient city press we may learn of the genesis of many of the leading families of these later times, whose foundations of wealth were laid in the hive of a relentless industry which characterized the home of their vigorous ancestry. Among those names most fre-

quently mentioned we come across one belonging to an early citizen whose prominence and genius have been little heard of by this generation.

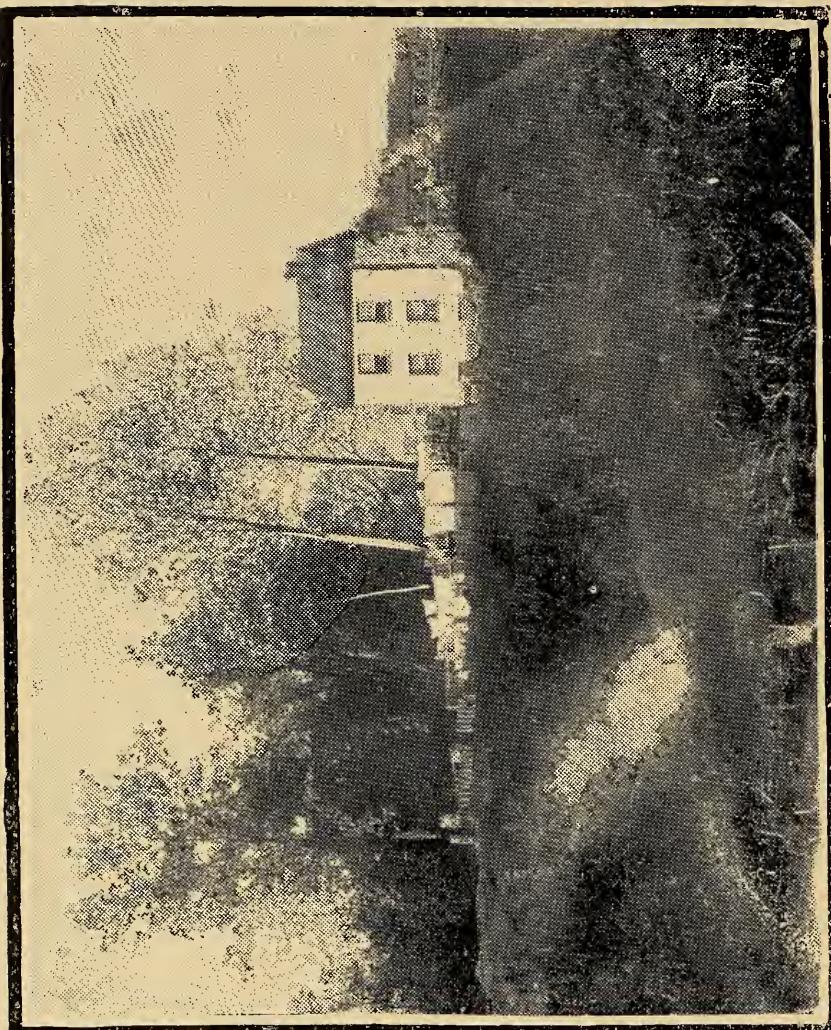
Thomas Leiper, for sixty-odd years, was a useful and influential figure in the activities of the last century. He found the opportunity while building up his own private fortunes to devote a great deal of his time, energy and capital to the advancement of the growing municipality.

This notable person came from Scotland in 1746, a youth of nineteen, and settled in Virginia. He was a younger son of Thomas Leiper, a Scottish patrician, and his wife who was Helen Hamilton (of the family of Kipe and Stane-House).

On his father's side the lad was descended from an ancestor of French origin who had come to Scotland, it is said, in the court of Mary Stuart, when that beautiful but erratic Queen returned to ascend the throne in 1561.

Though destined by his parents for the Kirk, the death of his father and the passing of the ancestral estate into the possession of an elder brother, diverted the young man from his intended career and determined him to come to America. Here he arrived with four brothers, in the year above stated.

While in Virginia, young Leiper became interested in the tobacco business. He remained in that province



THE LOCK TENDERS' HOUSE
LEIPERVILLE.



From Photograph by William H. Richardson.

but a short time and came to Philadelphia a few years prior to the American Revolution. Here he established a tobacco warehouse at No. 9 North Water street. In 1774 we find that he had become a snuff manufacturer and had located at No. 274 Market street and by this time was known as an extensive dealer in snuff and tobacco—those comforting essentials of the Colonial gentry.

In a comparatively short period he had amassed a fortune, as fortunes were then rated, and was reckoned among the most astute merchants.

Thomas Leiper was the friend of Washington, the companion of Jefferson and the champion of Jackson; a zealous and courageous advisor of the people in the times in which he lived; a strong advocate and supporter of the infant State; a leader of and a master among men. He was patriotic, popular and of the highest respectability.

America was already in the shadow of the Revolution. The people were struggling for the exercise of those undeniable rights and privileges into which they were born as freemen. In the agitations of those questions Thomas Leiper was prominent. He was one of the first to recommend a rupture with the mother country, and one of the last, afterward, to lay down his arms. When he saw that a conflict was inevitable he prudently allied himself with the Whig party and fast developed into one of the most ardent of patriots, sacrificing to the cause his energies and fortune.

On the evening of November 17th, 1774, "twenty-eight gentlemen, representing the wealth and respectability of the city," met in Carpenter's Hall and there organized the First Troop of Light-Horse, which became afterward known as the First City Troop. At the same time the following officers were

7
elected: Andrew Allen, 1st Lieut.; Samuel Morris, 2d Lieut.; James Mease, Cornet; Thomas Leiper, 1st Sergeant; Levi Hollingsworth, Quartermaster; William Pollard, 1st Corporal, and James Hunter, 2d Corporal.

The subsequent service of the First Troop in the war of the Revolution was exceptionally valuable. They were attached to General Washington's staff during that memorable campaign in the Jerseys, its members acting as bearers of despatches from the Commander-in-Chief to his generals. The Troop participated in the battles of Trenton, Princeton and Monmouth. At Trenton and Princeton they were actively engaged. Thomas Leiper being a great personal friend of General Mercer, was detailed with five other lighthorsemen to service on his staff, for the purpose of conveying intelligence. After four weeks duty they were relieved, with the thanks of General Washington. At Princeton, Leiper was by the side of General Mercer when he fell pierced by the British bullets, and when General Washington rode to the front to save the day Sergt. Leiper and the troop rallied about him. The only cavalry in this engagement were the twenty-five light horsemen of the First Troop.

While in the vicinity of Princeton, acting as escort to the Adj't. General of the Army, Col. Joseph Reed; Serg't Leiper and his squad of troopers came upon a British foraging party, which they promptly captured.

After their tour of duty in the Jerseys was completed the Troop were discharged. A personal letter of thanks was sent by General Washington to Captain Morris, at the time.

While acting in his capacity as Treasurer of the Troop, Thomas Leiper carried the last of the French subsidies to the Federal troops at York-

town. As the war continued, Sergt. Leiper contributed very largely by his own means, and was quite successful in raising funds to aid and equip other organizations for taking the field.

In 1778 we find his name enrolled upon the active list of the Patriotic Association of Philadelphia.

In 1780 the National Bank of the United States of America was organized, for the purpose of supplying provisions to the army. It was established in Philadelphia and had 92 subscribers contributing £300,000. Samuel Morris gave £5000, James Mease £5000 and Thomas Leiper £4000, and others less amounts. The bank was afterward (1782) incorporated as the Bank of North America.

At the close of the war when the country began to experience the new conditions of self-government, Thomas Leiper was in demand to take office, but he generally declined all those of emolument or pay. He presided at many of the town meetings, and in public affairs generally his culture and talents gave him a wide influence for good. The revival of trade, the establishment of enterprises calculated to develop the resources of the new nation, appealed strongly to his attention. He stimulated and advanced the prosperity of Philadelphia in every way.

Before leaving the subject of his military services, we may add that when the Whiskey Insurrection broke out in the Western part of Pennsylvania, the First Troop was early in the field, and Thomas Leiper went out with them as Second Lieutenant. This was in 1794.

Leiper's town residence was on Market street, near Fourth. Here he entertained hospitably his many and often distinguished, friends. He was a great admirer of Thomas Jefferson,

who, it is said, dined either at Leiper's, or Dr. Rush's and would go to no other place.

It was at the house of his friend, Thomas Leiper, that Jefferson was nominated for the Presidency in 1800. M. Leiper, at this time, was president of city councils, an office which he held for several years.

Long after the close of the century the tobacco merchant was credited with great wealth. He was an extensive investor in real estate in Philadelphia; he had large estates at Frankford; he owned the site of Wanamaker's Grand Depot, it is claimed, and the new Mansion House Hotel, which he erected at the southeast corner of Eleventh and Market streets, a site now occupied by the Bingham House. In company with John Chaloner, John Dunlap, John Mease and others, he purchased Tinicum Island from Thomas Levis, the agent for Chester county. The tract had been confiscated as the property of Joseph Galloway, a well-known royalist of Philadelphia, who fled to England during the Revolution.

Thomas Leiper's name is found among the taxables of Nether Providence township, Chester county, as early as 1779. It was probably on his property that Dr. Robert Harris established the powderworks with which his name was connected during the war with England. The Colonial records describe them as being located at Strathavon, which, we know, was the name of Leiper's Chester county possessions.

The tradition is, that by the year 1785, the plantation acquired by Thomas Leiper in the townships of Ridley, (to many hundreds of acres, enough to) Springfield and Providence, amounted form a continuous strip from the present site of Swarthmore College to the

Delaware river, approximately, three miles, and containing farms, mills, quarries, etc. In 1785 he erected a stone mansion on his beautiful estate which he had sometime before named "Strathavon," after the ancestral halls beyond the sea. He chose for the location of his house a pretty hillside which overlooks the picturesque scenery of Crum Creek. From broad piazzas, the owner could look out upon that forest-clad landscape lying over the ravine and clothing the opposite slopes in a garb of everlasting beauty. Below his dwelling, in a ravine, rushed the creek over its boulder-strewn bed, the whole scene suggesting, shall we say? something to the man's memory of boyhood's haunts among the wild glens and tarns of the old Scotch highlands.

It is interesting to note in this connection that over the gabled doorway of the mansion, its builder has carved two tobacco stalks, to symbolize the democratic origin of his riches—what armiger has nobler blazon! Around and about the mansion Leiper planted box bushes which he had imported from Holland, and the sugar maples which shaded his home were brought down from the Kaaterskills by his own oxen-express on the return from some tobacco-trading expedition to the plantations of Van Rensselaerwyck.

In the section of Delaware county where Thomas Leiper settled his family certain Revolutionary events have occurred, which add their historic interest to the story of the famous merchant and of the age in which he lived.

The great Southern post-road passed through the estate. It was traveled by the British and American armies in their manoeuvering for the possession of Philadelphia. The American forces retreated through the plantation from

the fatal field at Brandywine on their way to Darby.

Below Leiperville, then called Ridley, stands the old "White Horse Tavern," where Captain Culin was shot by one of his own men, and where Captain John Crosby was lured by a British boat's crew and captured.

In the angle of the same pike and the Leiper railroad, the old homestead of John MacIlvaine stands in partial ruin. This is the house where General Washington passed the night after the disastrous dash down the Brandywine hills. Peter Hill's mill is near at hand from which the Continental soldiers carried off grit and grain to the value of 5000 acres of Virginia land—the price that Congress paid for the foray. On the banks of Crum Creek, Hugh Lloyd, the son of Richard, of Darby, also had a grist mill, which is the one mentioned by General Washington when he instructed Gen. James Potter to scour the country and remove the burr-stones from certain mills that would be likely to come within the limits of General Howe's raids. Hugh Lloyd was a delegate to the Provincial Committee, which sat at Philadelphia in 1775.

Thomas Leiper was deeply interested in the useful arts and sciences. He was the friend and patron of internal improvements and to such enterprises as turnpikes, waterworks and canals, he is said to have given as much as \$100,000. He introduced into his factories the most recent devices; some were the result of his own investigations in the realm of mechanics.

In the development of his Delaware county estate, his genius for industrial progress is brilliantly displayed and his efforts foremost among the achievements of practical science.

The Crum Creek which flows through his plantation has a superior water-

power which was promptly used by its proprietor. A little way below Leiper's residence the valley of the creek broadens out and forms a small cove. Along the shelving banks of the stream and protected by high encircling hills on the west is a little village that long ago grew up about the factories which Mr. Leiper had established there from time to time. He christened the colony "Avondale," in remembrance of a little hamlet, in one of the glens of Scotland. The operations at this place consisted of two snuff mills, a stone-sawing mill, where the huge blocks of rough granite were brought from the adjacent quarries, and converted into curbing and coping. Higher up the stream was the grist mill, later transformed into a blade factory; all were propelled by the current. The farm laid the water-power under tribute to do the threshing and cider making and the churning for the dairy. Such were the first industries of Avondale. To-day, the visitor to the ancient place will find one of the two snuff mills used for a dwelling and the other a ruin. Yarn spinning succeeded snuff-making and more dwellings were needed.

The building is standing—a dwelling now—beneath whose massive arches the first practical attempt was made to saw stone by artificial appliances. The operation was long ago abandoned but the principle still lives in the methods now employed by stone-cutting concerns.

The surrounding hills produced the most valuable and permanent of the resources of the great Leiper estate. The quarries yielded unlimited quantities of excellent building stone, which was then, and has ever since continued to be, in demand. Some of the quarries were opened on Crum Creek in 1740, long before Thomas Leiper be-

came their owner and material from them entered into the construction of the most substantial houses of Philadelphia.

It is in connection with the development of these quarries that the name of Thomas Leiper stands out in luminous characters upon the pages of history as the pioneer and champion of inland transportation.

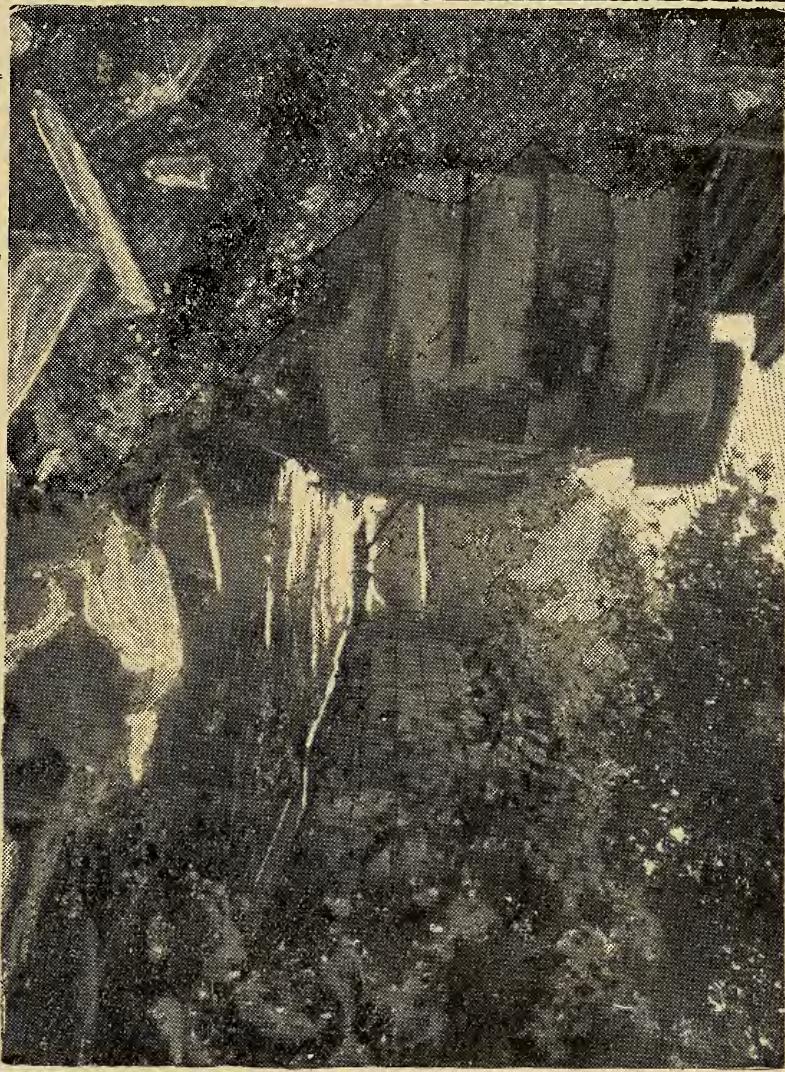
Out of his own vast fortune he founded the Leiper railway and the Leiper canal—lines of water and rail communication which improved and facilitated the transportation of the country and gave it its first impulse toward an immeasurable destiny.

The last years of Thomas Leiper's life were crowded with the triumphs of his activities. Possessing an honorable reputation, the most desirable personal qualities and excellent executive abilities, he was found generally at the head of the best corporations of the city and his name coupled in intimate commercial relation with the leading citizens throughout the land.

In 1800 we find him associated with A. J. Dallas, Robert Patterson and others in organizing the Penna. Improvement Company, whose object was the development of inland communication and banking. Later we note that he was connected with Dr. Mease, Robert Ralston, Robert Waln and Samuel Hazard in founding a savings bank under the corporate title of The Penna. Society for the Promotion of Economy. His experience with military affairs during the Revolution brought him the chairmanship of the Commission for the Defense of Philadelphia, when the peril of a British raid seemed imminent after the fall of Washington in 1814.

His name is found among the Lottery Commissioners appointed by the Governor when lotteries were a popu-

"THOMAS LEIFER LOGK 1828 AT CAREY'S BROOK.



From Photograph by William H. Richardson.

lar financial undertaking. Thomas M. Willing, Stephen Girard, Cad. Evans, Jr., William Jones and Thomas Leiper were appointed a commission by President Madison to superintend the subscriptions to the capital of the United States Bank, in 1816. He is found in Independence Hall, in 1817, with such men as Jared Ingersoll, Horace Binney, P. S. DuPonceau, Thomas Walsh and William Rawle, protesting against the practice and extension of human slavery.

He was a leader in the first attempt to organize the manufacturers of Philadelphia into a society for the better protection of their interests. Among the Presidential Electors on the Jackson ticket of 1823 we find his name, as we do lateh in connection with Jackson Day celebrations, as a presiding genius.

His death occurred in Philadelphia, in July, 1825. The Aurora thus eulogizes him: "For simpleness of heart, integrity of person and conduct, devotion to the cause of liberty and of his country, he was unsurpassed. He was an ornament to the city of Philadelphia, the pride of Pennsylvania, and advantageously and honorably known to the whole American nation."

* * *

When Thomas Leiper came into possession of his large Delaware County estate there were some stone quarries upon the tracts lying along Crum and Ridley Creeks. These quarries had been operated for many years and their product attained an excellent reputation for superior quality.

The rapid rise and solid growth of Philadelphia kept the demand for good building stone constantly on the increase until the prompt delivery of the orders became a matter of serious consideration. The solution of the ques-

tion, however, was at hand when Thomas Leiper conceived the idea of building a canal from tidewater of Crum Creek to the quarries at Avondale.

The plan was to utilize principally the creek itself which was in places wide, deep, and well adapted for such a purpose. The grades were to be overcome by a system of locking and short water levels.

In 1790 the matter had been so far developed that Thomas Leiper made application to the Pennsylvania Assembly for the privilege of carrying out his plans, and about the same time a representation was also made to the Assembly in behalf of the petition, by twenty-eight of the principal masons and bricklayers of Philadelphia, who claimed "that the stones raised from Leiper's quarries are the best produced in the neighborhood of the city for the purposes of curbstones, flags and house-building."

Notwithstanding the energetic support of these men, and his own personal influence, Leiper's petition was opposed. John and Richard Crosby who owned and operated a forge near the great Southern post road, objected because it was feared their mill dam would be ruined by the canal. The most formidable opposition came from the members of the Assembly itself who believed that the idea was chimerical, visionary, and ruinous; thus the wisdom of the Legislature, great as it was, proved unequal to the emergency and so the bill failed.

Thomas Leiper out of these difficulties evolved another expedient which he partly describes in a notice appearing in *The American Advertiser*, April 1, 1793, and reading in part, as follows:

"Card to the public—The subscriber having failed in his application to facilitate the transportation of stone to

this city by opening a canal from the quarries on Crum Creek, to the tide-water of the River Delaware, has endeavored, notwithstanding, to ensure an abundant supply of that article by means of an approved and regular land carriage, in which waggons capable of carrying upwards of 10 tons will be constantly employed.

"He returns thanks for the orders he has heretofore received, but regrets that, from unavoidable cause, he could not preserve a perfect punctuality in executing them. He has, however, surmounted many difficulties by shortening and improving the road, as well as by enlarging the size of the flats and waggons which he employs, so that, besides 4000 feet of curbstone now collected in Philadelphia and at the landing-place on Crum Creek, he expects in the course of the ensuing season to cut double the quantity that was used in the city during the last year. He is therefore ready to contract for the delivery of any quantity of curbstone, building or foundation stone, flags for pavements, and Weaver's freestone in the rough, at any place or port in the United States.

"The subscriber, meaning at some future time, as well as for the public benefit, as for the advancement of his own interests, to renew his application to the General Assembly, is preparing for the perusal and information of his fellow citizens, a statement of the proceeding and arguments respecting the proposed canal on Crum Creek, from which, he trusts, it will appear to a very disinterested and candid mind, that similar plans have received the sanction of the Legislature; that his proposition combined public good with private interests, and that use and value of the property of his neighbors so far from being injured, would

be materially improved and appreciated by the success of his design."

As an advertisement writer Thomas Leiper seems to have been a success, as subsequent events will show.

It is probable that the "land carriage," described here, is the first mention made of a practical attempt in the use of tramways—for such we may assume it was, and destined soon to revolutionize modes of travel and inaugurate the magnificent system of railways which to-day encircles the globe.

In 1797, Thomas Leiper advertises that he "will enter into a contract for the whole of the curbstone that may be wanted this year for the supply of the city and districts, at 3 pence per foot lower than such stone can be furnished by any other person. It will be warranted the best that ever came to Philadelphia," and cites from a certificate issued by Mr. William Covert and other City Commissioners, dated December 31, 1791, that "in their opinion the curb and gutter stone from Thomas Leiper's quarries, exceed in goodness any other that yet have been made use of for the city pavements."

The epoch approaching 1809 was probably a period of success in the methods hitherto adopted. It is evident that Thomas Leiper's fertile mind had been again at work for he had, at this time, elaborated a more extensive plan for connecting his quarries with the river commerce, and at this date had secured John Thomson, whose son, J. Edgar Thomson, afterward became president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, to make surveys, draughts and estimate for a line of railway to run across the steep grades of the divide, which separates the Crum from Ridley Creek, and at a point below Avondale on the former and Pierce Crosby's mills on the latter stream.

A Scotch mechanic named Somer-

ville, who had probably seen such devices in England or Scotland, where the idea was first demonstrated, built for Thomas Leiper an experimental track under Leiper's supervision, in the courtyard of the Bull's Head Tavern, by Poplar Lane in the Northern Liberties. The track was 60 yards long, graded $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to the yard, four feet gauge and the sleepers laid 8 feet apart. Up this incline a single horse drew a loaded car, weighing 10,690 pounds, to the summit, and under a disadvantage of having to travel through loose earth. This trial, which determined the success of the venture, occurred in September, 1809 and was witnessed by a large number of persons; among them were Prof. Robert Patterson, of the University of Pennsylvania; Callender Irvine, Superintendent of the U. S. Naval Stores; John Glenn, Mr. Leiper's agent, and others. Reading Howell was the engineer in charge.

Thomas Leiper immediately began the construction of what is said to be the first railway put to practical use in America. Its length was three-fourths of a mile and the estimated cost £1592.47. At first the rails used were made of oak scantling but they soon wore out from the friction of the cast-iron flanged car wheels and a stone track was substituted, which lasted the nineteen years of subsequent service. During this period the cars were drawn by oxen.

The writer, in company with an artist, recently visited the site of the original railroad and was enabled to find some hundreds of yards of the old cut and embankments on the hill back of Carey's Bank. There is but little change in the appearance of what is left of it since it was abandoned 70 years ago. The overgrowth of briars and rubbish had been cut away and

left the line of the railway perfectly clear. The largest part of the roadbed was long ago filled in and worked over by the enterprising farmers who afterward came into possession of the disintegrated estate.

Twenty years after its inception it was abandoned. In the meantime Thomas Leiper had died and his eldest son—George Grey Leiper revived the original project for a canal. Canals were then in high favor and were considered the most convenient and economical systems of inland travel.

George G. Leiper, who had been a member of the General Assembly in 1822-23 succeeded in obtaining in 1828, the coveted privilege by law, and the long deferred building of the canal proceeded as originally intended by the father.

William Strickland, one of the leading engineers of the time and an enthusiast upon the subject of waterways was engaged, and put in charge of the operation. Work was begun in 1828 and the canal finally completed and opened for traffic in 1829. A contemporary has preserved a description of the ceremonies attending the celebration of its opening from which we take the following extract:

"At 1 o'clock the ladies were escorted to the canal boat 'William Strickland,' a beautiful boat 55 feet in length and named after that distinguished engineer. In the stern of the boat was stationed a band of music which played, during the passage of the boat up to the quarries, a distance of nearly two miles, some of the most fashionable and patriotic airs. Attached to the boat were two handsome, full-blooded 'Windflower' colts, neatly decorated with covers and trimmed with ribbons. At half-past one the signal was given and the procession moved on in carriages and gigs, and gentlemen on horseback accompanied

the boat as she smoothly glided through the unruffled stream to her place of destination. The sight as may well be imagined was truly grand and inspiring. When the 'William Strickland, entered the first lock named after the venerable proprietor, three cheers were given. In a few minutes after, she entered the Thomas Leiper lock, which, for beauty of stone and superior workmanship, is unrivalled in the United States. Such is the opinion of Messrs Strickland and Struthers of Philadelphia and Major Bender.

"On the Leiper Lock, the Delaware County Volunteer Battalion, under the command of Lieut. Col. Myers, were posted, and as soon as the boat passed through it a national salute was fired by the Penna. Artillerists accompanied with musketry. The boat was precisely one half-hour from the time she left the great Southern road until she arrived at the mansion of Hon. George G. Leiper. The ladies were then landed and the boat proceeded on her passage up to the quarries without any accident having occurred to impede her progress.

"The troops were then paraded in front of the mansion of Mr. Leiper and were addressed by him in a very appropriate manner. Afterward his house was thrown open to those who were disposed to refresh themselves with his hospitality. There were at least 1000 persons present at the ceremonies. Had the weather been favorable a much greater crowd would have been there. In all the bustle incident to such a parade no serious accident occurred to mar the pleasures of the day."

The canal, in addition to its specified object, served also, as a water-power for the mills along its banks, and that alone survives to-day. It was a mile long and quite narrow.

Starting from Crum Creek, about a hundred yards north of the present crossing of the P. W. & B. R. R., a short distance below Leiperville, Ridley, as it was then called, has since risen into some prominence by reason of its connection with the Leiper industries. At the starting point was the landing where for 50 years past vessels had traded in stone with the outside world. Here were the first series of locks, also the basin and beyond these the boats passed into the creek at Crosby's dam and proceeded over the long, deep, shady reaches till they arrived at "Lapidea," the last locking stage.

At this point—locally called Carey's Bank, the locks were about a quarter of a mile apart and situated in the midst of the most picturesque surroundings; beside them, was the bieachery green of an old mill that was once a grist mill during the Revolution. It was then known as Hugh Lloyd's Mills and was converted by the Leipers into a woolen factory. In this beautiful dell Judge Leiper came to live; here he erected his great mansion in 1811 and with John P. Crozier operated the mill for several years afterward.

The principal lock was located at the foot of Judge Leiper's lawn, where it may be seen to-day, as the artist has caught the scene, beautiful even in its ruin, as an example of the stonedressers' art. The main lock chamber is about 100 feet long, 12 feet wide and as deep as wide. Its walls are constructed of the choicest blocks of fine grained granite that came out of the Leiper quarries; some of them measured twelve and fourteen feet in length and a yard wide, all laid in uniform courses a foot in depth. Each stone has a smooth finish and chamfered on the edges. The locks were named

respectively "Elizabeth Leiper Lock 1828." and "Thomas Leiper Lock 1828." The inscriptions were carved deeply in six-inch letters in the face of the wall. Nothing is left of the old timbers of the lockgates, except a chance bit of oak clinging to a rusty hinge in the ruin. All about them is the deserted village of Carey's Bank with the tumbling mansion of Judge Leiper at the head of it.

The course of the canal ran along and formed a boundary to Judge Leiper's lawn passing near his door so that all the traffic over its waters was visible to the master's eye. Above the lawn the boats passed into the dam at Blackbird Island—an islet which the Judge had converted into a bowery spot for the resort of his household and from thence over the last long reach, past the several quarries to the end of the journey at Avondale.

During twenty-two years of uninterrupted activity most of the great mass of stone which forms the breakwater at Lewes, Del., which helped to bulwark the Schuylkill at Fairmount and rear the Blockley Hospital and numerous buildings in Philadelphia and elsewhere passed down the historic watercourse to the river, before the career of the canal closed.

A second railway, built in 1852, superseded the canal. It was a narrow-gauge affair and followed the route of the canal. It was for many years operated, as the writer well remembers, by a long file of gray horses, which at regular intervals twice a day passed down the grade with their train of heavily laden flats, to the landing where schooners received the freight to carry it, as Leiper advertised in 1793, "to any place or port in the United States."

When the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad completed their line through this

section of the county in 1887, the Leiper railway became a tributary freight branch. The steam cars thundered through that beautiful little village; they run into the very heart of Strathavon and thus have destroyed forever, the charm of its repose and the domesticity of its ancient industries; but the effort of Thomas Leiper and his private enterprise have attained an end far beyond the most extravagant expectation of the founder.

If anything is needed to show how heredity reflects the excellencies as well as other traits of character upon succeeding generations—one needs but to glance over the brief but interesting genealogy of this remarkable man. He gave to his posterity not only the virtues which were the adornment of his long and useful life, but also, the strong martial qualities which he inherited from ancestors who may have fought on Flodden Field.

Several of his descendants have won distinction on the battle field of the Republic and others have gained eminence in the victorious courts of Peace.

Sometime toward the beginning of the Revolution Thomas Leiper married Elizabeth Coulter Grey, the eldest daughter of Hon. George Grey, of Grey's Ferry, whose wife, (nee Martha Ibbetson of Whiteby Hall), rendered such humane and devoted service to the wounded soldiers in Philadelphia, while that city was occupied by the British, as to call forth high commendation from both British and American officers.

Thomas Leiper had several children. Elizabeth, the oldest, married Robert Taylor who were the parents of Dr. George S., James L., Samuel L., and Thomas L. Taylor. Martha married the well-known Presbyterian minister, Rev. Jacob J. Janeway. Helen Ham-

3477
12-17
Style?

ilton Leiper became the wife of Dr. Robert Maskel Patterson, (son of Prof. Patterson), who was appointed by President Jackson in 1805, Director of the U. S. Mint. Ann G. married George G. Thomas. Jane D. married Hon. John K. Kane, Judge of the Admiralty and U. S. Court for the Eastern District of Penna. They had five sons: Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, Surgeon U. S. Navy and the famous explorer who lost his life in the polar region while in search of Sir John Franklin's party. General Thomas L. Kane—sometime Colonel of the 42d Penna. ("Bucktails") Vols.; Robert P. Kane of the Philadelphia Bar and John K. Kane of Wilmington, Delaware. Julia Leiper became the wife of Colonel Henry Taylor, of Virginia; George Grey Leiper married Eliza S. Thomas. George was a leading textile manufacturer as well as a quarry operator on Crum and Ridley Creeks. He was Captain of the Delaware County Fencibles in the War of 1812; a member of the Penna. General Assembly 1822-23; Congressman in 1848-49 and was afterward appointed an associate Judge of

the Delaware County Courts. John C., his son, married Mary, the daughter of Captain Peter Fassoux whose wife was Rebecca the daughter of General William Irvine, Colonel of the Penna. Line in the Revolution and later a Brigadier and Commissary General U. S. A. Samuel M. Leiper was married to Mary B. Lewis and their son, Thomas I. Leiper, became a Colonel in the war of the Rebellion. He was also attached to the staff of his cousin, Gen. Thomas L. Kane. James Leiper married Ann, the daughter of Pierce Crosby, a prominent manufacturer of Upland, Pa. William J. Leiper died unmarried.

Gen Chas. I. Leiper, recently deceased, also belonged to this family of Leipers. In the Rebellion he was Colonel of the 17th Penna. Regiment, (Rush's Lancers). Such is a partial array of the military talent of a family who trace their descent from the famous trooper of 1774.

Several of the younger generation have already served in the Cuban Campaign and others are at the front in the Philippines.



1848
1851
1876





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 312 406 A

